

Message Text

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E.O. 11652: N/A

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SUBJECT: NOMINATION OF SOVIET HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH GROUPS
FOR NOBEL PEACE PRIZE

1. CSCE COMMISSION ON FEBRUARY 3 ISSUED FOLLOWING PRESS
RELEASE ON NOMINATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH GROUPS
IN USSR FOR NOBEL PEACE PRIZE:

BEGIN TEXT

ELEVEN MEMBERS OF THE US COMMISSION ON SECURITY AND
COOPERATION IN EUROPE -- ALL OF THEM MEMBERS OF EITHER
THE SENATE OR THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES -- ANNOUNCED
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TODAY THAT THEY HAD PROPOSED THE 43-MEMBER HELSINKI
WATCH GROUPS IN THE SOVIET UNION FOR THE 1978 NOBEL
PEACE PRIZE. THE COMMISSIONERS ANNOUNCED THEIR NOMI-
NATION ON THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE FEBRUARY 3, 1977 ARREST
OF ALEKSANDR GINZBURG, A FOUNDING MEMBER OF THE PUBLIC
GROUP TO PROMOTE OBSERVANCE OF THE HELSINKI AGREEMENT

IN THE USSR AND THE FIRST OF 16 HUMAN RIGHTS ACTIVISTS
TO BE IMPRISONED IN THE LAST YEAR.

THE SOVIET HELSINKI WATCHERS -- COMPOSED OF PUBLIC
GROUPS IN MOSCOW, THE UKRAINE, LITHUANIA, GEORGIA AND
ARMENIA -- HAVE "SACRIFICED THEIR EASE, SECURITY AND
OFTEN THEIR FREEDOM TO ADVANCE THE CAUSE OF PEACE, OF
PEACE FOUNDED IN NATIONS' RESPECT FOR THE DIGNITY OF
EVERY CITIZEN, OF PEACE FOUNDED ON UNIVERSAL ACCEPTANCE
OF UNIVERSAL STANDARDS OF HUMAN RIGHTS," THE COMMIS-
SIONERS' JANUARY 30 LETTER OF NOMINATION SAID. NOTING
THAT THE GROUPS CONTINUE TO FUNCTION DESPITE THE
CAMPAIGN OF PERSECUTION AGAINST THEM, THE COMMISSIONERS
SAID THEIR WORK "IS THE WORK OF MEN AND WOMEN OF GREAT
MORAL COURAGE. THEY HAVE PUT THEIR LIVES AT THE SERVICE
OF PEACE AND DECENCY IN THE CONDUCT OF NATIONS."

THE NOMINATION WAS SIGNED BY CONGRESSIONAL MEMBERS OF
THE COMMISSION: REPRESENTATIVE DANTE FASCELL (D-FLA),
CHAIRMAN; SENATOR CLAIBORNE PELL (D-RI), CO-CHAIRMAN;
SENATORS DICK CLARK (D-IOWA), RICHARD STONE (D-FLA),
CLIFFORD P. CASE (R-NJ), AND ROBERT DOLE (R-KAN);
AND REPRESENTATIVES JONATHAN B. BINGHAM (D-NY), PAUL
SIMON (D-ILL), SIDNEY R. YATES (D-ILL), JOHN BUCHANAN
(R-ALA), AND MILLICENT FENWICK (R-NJ). THE THREE
EXECUTIVE BRANCH MEMBERS OF THE COMMISSION ARE NOT
ELIGIBLE, UNDER THE RULES OF THE NOBEL INSTITUTE, TO
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MAKE NOMINATIONS FOR THE PEACE PRIZE, FOR WHICH CANDI-
DATES CAN BE PROPOSED BY MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENTS,
PREVIOUS LAUREATES AND OTHERS.

THE SOVIET HELSINKI WATCHERS HAVE ALREADY BEEN
NOMINATED FOR THE PEACE PRIZE BY GROUPS OF PARLIAMEN-
TARIANS IN NORWAY AND BELGIUM.

THE US HELSINKI COMMISSION WAS CREATED IN JUNE, 1976,
TO MONITOR AND ENCOURAGE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE
PROVISIONS OF THE 35-NATION HELSINKI ACCORD SIGNED IN
AUGUST, 1975. IN THE COURSE OF ITS WORK, THE COMMISSION
PUBLISHED TWO VOLUMES OF ENGLISH TRANSLATIONS OF REPORTS
OF THE SOVIET MONITORS AND HEARD TESTIMONY FROM MEMBERS
OF THE MOSCOW AND LITHUANIAN GROUPS NOW IN EXILE IN
THE US.

END TEXT.

2. TEXT OF LETTER DATED JANUARY 30 FROM ELEVEN MEMBERS
OF COMMISSION TO NOBEL INSTITUTE IS AS FOLLOWS:

BEGIN TEXT.

NOBEL INSTITUTE
DRAMMENSVEIN 19
OSLO, NORWAY

GENTLEMEN:

BEGINNING IN MAY, 1976, A GROUP OF ORDINARY CITIZENS OF THE SOVIET UNION DEDICATED THEMSELVES TO PROMOTING COMPLIANCE BY THEIR GOVERNMENT WITH THE HUMANITARIAN PROVISIONS OF THE 1975 HELSINKI ACCORD. COLLECTING AND DISSEMINATING INFORMATION ON VIOLATIONS OF THOSE PROVISIONS, THESE ACTIVISTS EXPRESSED IN THEIR WORK LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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THEIR STATED "CONVICTION THAT THE ISSUES OF HUMANITARIANISM AND FREE INFORMATION HAVE A DIRECT RELATIONSHIP TO THE PROBLEM OF INTERNATIONAL SECURITY." RESPECT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE USSR, THEY HELD, IS A PRECONDITION FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF A SOLID EAST-WEST DETENTE.

IN THEIR COURAGEOUS ACTIVITY, THEY HAVE EXPRESSED THE VIEW HELD BY THE LATE NOBEL PEACE LAUREATE, MARTIN LUTHER KING, THAT "INJUSTICE ANYWHERE IS A THREAT TO JUSTICE EVERYWHERE." DOCUMENTING AND PUBLICIZING BREACHES OF THE HELSINKI ACCORD -- POLITICAL, RELIGIOUS AND ETHNIC PERSECUTION; OBSTACLES TO TRAVEL; CENSORSHIP OF COMMUNICATIONS -- 42 MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC GROUPS TO PROMOTE OBSERVANCE OF THE HELSINKI AGREEMENT IN THE USSR SACRIFICED THEIR EASE, SECURITY AND OFTEN THEIR FREEDOM TO ADVANCE THE CAUSE OF PEACE, OF PEACE FOUNDED IN NATIONS' RESPECT FOR THE DIGNITY OF EVERY CITIZEN, OF PEACE FOUNDED ON UNIVERSAL ACCEPTANCE OF UNIVERSAL STANDARDS OF HUMAN RIGHTS.

FOR THEIR EFFORTS MANY OF THEM HAVE ALREADY PAID A TERRIBLE PRICE. IN A TRIAL EFFECTIVELY CLOSED TO THE PUBLIC, HELD IN A MAKESHIFT COURTROOM IN A FACTORY, THE UKRAINIAN HELSINKI MONITORS MYKOLA RUDENKO AND OLEKSEI TYKHY, A WRITER AND A TEACHER, WERE SENTENCED LAST JULY, RESPECTIVELY, TO 12 AND 15 YEARS IN PRISON CAMP AND EXILE. MYKOLA MATUSEVYCH AND MYROSLAV MARYNOVYCH OF THE UKRAINIAN GROUP WERE ARRESTED IN APRIL, 1977, AND THEIR COLLEAGUE, LEVKO LUKYANENKO, WAS IMPRISONED LAST DECEMBER, YET NONE OF THE THREE HAS BEEN TRIED.

SIMILARLY, THREE FOUNDERS OF THE MOSCOW GROUP -- ALEKSANDR GINZBURG, PROFESSOR YURI ORLOV AND ANATOLY SHCHARANSKY --

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HAVE BEEN IMPRISONED NEARLY A YEAR NOW WITHOUT TRIAL. THE FIRST TWO WERE ARRESTED IN FEBRUARY, 1977, AND SHCHARANSKY, A JEWISH ACTIVIST, WAS SEIZED IN MARCH, REPORTEDLY TO FACE TREASON CHARGES.

APRIL BROUGHT THE ARRESTS OF TWO FOUNDERS OF THE EIGHT-MEMBER GEORGIAN GROUP TO PROMOTE, ZVIAD GAMSAKHURDIA AND MERAB KOSTAVA. BOTH HAVE BEEN TRANSFERRED WITHOUT TRIAL FROM TBILISI TO A PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITAL IN MOSCOW, WHILE A THIRD GEORGIAN MONITOR, GRIGORI GOLDSSTEIN, HAS BEEN ARRESTED JUST THIS MONTH TO FACE CHARGES OF PARASITISM.

IN MAY, MOSCOW GROUP MEMBER MALVA LANDA WAS EXILED TO SIBERIA, WHERE ONE OF HER COLLEAGUES, ANATOLI MARCHENKO, IS ALSO SERVING A TERM DUE TO END LATE THIS YEAR. FINALLY, LITHUANIAN GROUP MEMBER VIKTORAS PETKUS WAS ARRESTED LAST AUGUST AT THE SAME TIME THAT FELIKS SEREBROV, A HELSINKI WATCHER ESPECIALLY ACTIVE IN INVESTIGATING THE USE OF PSYCHIATRIC TERROR AGAINST POLITICAL DISSENTERS, WAS JAILED IN MOSCOW.

YET DESPITE SUCH PERSECUTION, THE GROUPS CONTINUE TO ASSEMBLE THEIR MATERIAL AND TO TRANSMIT IT TO THE HELSINKI SIGNATORIES FOR CONSIDERATION, EVALUATION AND PUBLIC ATTENTION. THE FLOW OF INFORMATION -- LIKE THE CURRENT OF REPRESSION IN THE SOVIET UNION ITSELF -- IS ALMOST UNINTERRUPTED. THE WORK OF THE PUBLIC GROUPS IN MOSCOW, THE UKRAINE, LITHUANIA, GEORGIA AND ARMENIA IS THE WORK OF MEN AND WOMEN OF GREAT MORAL COURAGE. THEY HAVE PUT THEIR LIVES AT THE SERVICE OF PEACE AND DECENCY IN THE CONDUCT OF NATIONS.

THEIR DEDICATION AND THEIR SACRIFICE HAVE EARNED THEM THE ACKNOWLEDGEMENT THE NOBEL INSTITUTE, MOST ESPECIALLY, CAN GIVE. FOR US, THE CONGRESSIONAL MEMBERS OF THE

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UNITED STATES COMMISSION ON SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE, IT IS AN HONOR TO NOMINATE THE PUBLIC GROUPS TO PROMOTE OBSERVANCE OF THE HELSINKI AGREEMENT IN THE USSR FOR THE 1978 NOBEL PEACE PRIZE.

SINCERELY YOURS,

END TEXT.

3. WE REGRET LACK OF PRIOR INFORMATION ON NOMINATION.
DEPARTMENT WAS NOT INFORMED OF PLAN BY COMMISSION IN
ADVANCE. ACCORDING TO COMMISSION, SINCE NOMINATIONS
FOR NOBEL PEACE PRIZE CAN COME ONLY FROM PARLIAMENTARIANS,
IT WAS FELT THAT THE INITIATIVE SHOULD COME SOLELY
FROM THE CONGRESSIONAL MEMBERS OF THE CSCE COMMISSION.

4. NO QUESTIONS ON COMMISSION NOMINATION WERE RAISED
AT FRIDAY NOON PRESS BRIEFING.

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